

WASHINGTON, DC – Today Congressman Robert C. “Bobby” Scott (D-VA), Ranking Member of the House Judiciary Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, Homeland Security and Investigations, and Congressman Walter Jones (R-NC) introduced the Youth Prison Reduction through Opportunities, Mentoring, Intervention, Support, and Education (“Youth PROMISE”) Act (H.R. 1318).

The Youth PROMISE Act will provide resources to communities to engage in comprehensive, evidence-based prevention and intervention strategies to decrease violence, gang crime, illegal drug activity and other crime. Under the Youth PROMISE Act, communities facing the greatest youth gang and crime challenges will each form a local council of representatives from law enforcement, court services, schools, social service organizations, health and mental health providers, the business community, and other public and private community-based organizations, including faith-based organizations. The council will develop a comprehensive plan for implementing evidence-based prevention and intervention strategies for young people who are at-risk of becoming involved, or who are already involved, in gangs, or the criminal justice system to redirect them toward productive and law-abiding alternatives.

"The United States now has the highest average incarceration rate of any nation in the world, and the cost of corrections in this country has risen to over \$68 billion a year," Mr. Scott said. "All the credible research and evidence shows that a continuum of evidenced-based prevention and intervention programs for at-risk youth will greatly reduce crime *and* save much more than they cost."

"In this time of budgetary constraint, the Youth PROMISE Act is a wise investment," continued Rep. Scott. "Ultimately, the Youth PROMISE Act will prevent crime while also saving lives, saving communities and saving money."

"In addressing the very serious issue of youth crime, we know that local communities know best," commented Rep. Jones. "The Youth Promise Act will empower these communities and help them create plans to prevent youth crime and incarceration that will save taxpayers in the long run."

The Youth PROMISE Act has the support of over 250 national, state, and local government, professional, civil rights, education and religious organizations, including the National

Association of Counties, the National Conference of Mayors, the Children's Defense Fund, the National Juvenile Justice Network, Fight Crime: Invest in Kids, the National Education Association, the NAACP, the American Bar Association, the Coalition for Juvenile Justice, and the Campaign for Youth Justice, to name a few.

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